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# MALAYSIA



## A G E N E R A L G U I D E



All information contained herein is correct at the time of printing. Whilst every care is taken in the preparation of this brochure, Tourism Malaysia cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracy, omission or alteration that may occur.

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### Visa Exemption:

No visas are required for citizens of Commonwealth countries (except Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), British Protected Persons or citizens of the Republic of Ireland and citizens of Switzerland, Netherlands, San Marino and Liechtenstein.

### Three Months Visa Free Visit

Citizens of Albania, Austria, Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Belgium, Czech Republic, Republic of Slovakia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Lebanon, Morocco, Norway, Oman, Qatar, Spain, South Korea, Republic of Bosnia, Sweden, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, United States of America, United Arab Emirates and Yemen are eligible for three months visa free visit.

### One Month Visa Free Visit

Applicable to citizens of ASEAN countries (except Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam).

### 14-Days Visa Free Visit

Citizens of Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Libya and Syria are eligible for 14-days visa free visit.

### 7-Days Visa Free Visit

Applicable to citizens of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Republic of Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia, Romania, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Air travellers on transit (not exceeding 72 hours) are eligible for a visa-free visit.

As regulations may change from time to time, it is advisable to check with the nearest Malaysian Embassy before your departure.

## CUSTOMS FORMALITIES

### Currency

Visitors entering Malaysia may bring in or take out any amount of currency.

### Dutiable and Non-Dutiable Goods

Certain goods such as the following, imported by visitors are liable to duty: carpets, garments, clothing accessories, jewellery, chocolates, handbags, spirits, alcoholic beverages, tobacco and cigarettes. Visitors bringing in dutiable goods may have to pay a deposit for temporary importation, refundable on departure. The goods are to be presented at the time of departure at the point of exit together with the deposit receipts. Non-dutiable goods include cameras, watches, pens, lighters, perfumeries and cosmetics.

### Health Regulations

Yellow Fever vaccination is required for all visitors coming from yellow fever infected areas or endemic zones except for children under 1 year of age.



Malayan Railway's modern coaches.

## GETTING AROUND

### Air

Malaysia is served by more than 40 international airlines including Malaysia Airlines which services over 115 international routes around the globe. In addition to Malaysia Airlines, a number of other airlines including Pelangi Air, Berjaya Air and Mofaz Air also provide regular domestic flights to the many tourist destinations and cities within the country.



International-standard accommodation.

## ACCOMMODATION

Malaysia has a wide range of accommodation at competitive rates. International standard hotels, medium and budget hotels, youth hostels, and timeshare apartments are just some of the types of accommodation available. A room in an international-standard hotel costs from RM250.00 and above, whilst the medium and budget category of accommodation cost from RM100.00. A list of accommodation is obtainable from any of the Tourism Malaysia's offices around the world.

## EATING OUT

Eating out in Malaysia is a real gastronomic adventure. There is such a great variety - spicy Malay food, a seemingly endless variety of Chinese food, exotic cuisine from North and South India, as well as Nyonya and Portuguese food. Popular Malaysian dishes



Savour the many varieties of Malaysian gourmet specialities.

include *satay*, *nasi lemak*, *rendang*, *roti canai*, *murtabak*, *laksa*, chicken rice and fried noodles. Western cuisine is easily available. In addition, international fast-food chains operate in the major towns side by side with thousands of roadside stalls and food bazaars.



Modern shopping complex.

## SHOPPING

Shopping in Malaysia is a voyage of never ending discovery - a hunt for the rare treasures of the Orient, a branded designer good or an intricate local handicraft. Malaysia presents the shopper the best the region has to offer. The competitive ringgit exchange, the variety of product lines, quality goods as well as the choice of shopping venues have made Malaysia a shopper's paradise. If you are looking for something uniquely Malaysian, you couldn't go wrong with pewter ware, songket and batik, to name a few.

Malaysia's tax havens are Pulau Langkawi and Labuan. Duty free areas are also found at Rantau Panjang and



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### Rail

It is also possible to travel by rail within and to Malaysia via Thailand and Singapore. Malayan Railway or Keretapi Tanah Melayu Bhd (KTM) connects all the major towns in the peninsular. The KTM commuter service has speedy electric trains plying between Kuala Lumpur and towns in its vicinity i.e Rawang, Seremban and Port Klang. There is a luxury train service, the Eastern and Oriental Express, which makes a round trip from Singapore through Kuala Lumpur to Bangkok and return.



North - South Expressway

### Road

Malaysian roads are among the best in this region. Driving is an interesting mode of seeing the country. An overland journey to Malaysia from Thailand and Singapore can be made easily by driving through the North-South Expressway on the West coast and East-West highway to the East coast. Car rental services are easily available. Buses, taxis and coaches, both interstate and local ply between various destinations.

### Sea

All popular island destinations are not only served by air but also by ferries or hydrofoils. Ferry or hydrofoil services are available from the mainland to the main island resorts of Langkawi, Penang, Pangkor and Tioman. Ferry services are also available from Changi Point, Singapore to Tanjung Belungkor in Desaru, Johor.

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Malaysia's tax havens are Pulau Langkawi and Labuan. Duty free areas are also found at Rantau Panjang and Pengkalan Kubur both in Kelantan, and Padang Besar and Bukit Kayu Hitam in Kedah. An interesting mix of duty free shops can also be found at city centres and airports in Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru and Penang.

## ENTERTAINMENT AND NIGHTLIFE

When the sun goes down, the city nightspots pulsate to the rhythm of the nightlife. There's always something to do in cities, with their profusion of karaoke lounges, pubs, cinemas, theatres, nightclubs, cabarets, bowling alleys and snooker centres. This is complemented by *pasar malam*, the local night street market.



Golf - a popular sport.

## SPORTS

Sports and sporting events command a very large following among Malaysian of all ages. Soccer enjoys a tremendous popularity. Also popular are badminton, sepak takraw, tennis, golf, squash and motor racing. Sea sports such as wind-surfing and sailing are gaining popularity and traditional Malaysian pastimes such as sepak takraw, giant top spinning and kite flying are also pursued. Most hotels have their own well-equipped health clubs as well as swimming pools.



## MAJOR FESTIVALS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

### **Hari Raya Aidil Fitri**

Hari Raya Aidil Fitri is celebrated by Muslims after the month-long Ramadan (Fasting month). Muslims usher in the new year with prayers in the mosques followed by receiving well-wishers in their homes.

### **Chinese New Year (January/February)**

Chinese New Year is a joyous time when friends and relatives give each other 'angpows' - red packets with a gift of cash as a token of prosperity - and celebrate with feasts and lion dances to ward off evil spirits and usher in the lunar new year. Family reunion dinners are a must among Chinese on the eve of the new year.

### **City Day (1 February)**

Kuala Lumpur commemorates its declaration as a Federal Territory on 1 February with festivities centred at Taman Tasik Perdana, its premier lake gardens and Taman Titiwangsa.



*Floral Parade - colourful floats, bedecked in flowers.*

### **Flora Festival/Parade (July)**

Kuala Lumpur, the Garden City blooms even lovelier during this week!. There will be flora hunts, flower sales, exhibitions of Malaysia's diverse flora at public gardens, and hotel lobbies. Shopping complexes will also be attractively-displayed with floral arrangements. The week culminates in a spectacular international Floral Parade.

### **National Day (31 August)**

The country celebrates its independence on 31 August with parades and shows. Towns and cities throughout Malaysia will be gaily decorated and adorned with lights for the grand occasion.

### **Malaysia Fest (September)**

For two weeks, all the major hotels and shopping complexes join forces to feature the culture, cuisine and handicrafts of the various states in Malaysia.



*Cultural extravaganza at the Malaysia Fest.*

### **Shopping Carnival (October)**

Bargains galore at shopping establishments in Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru and Penang during this annual two-week shopping extravaganza.

### **Deepavali (October/November)**

Deepavali, the 'Festival of Lights' is a celebration which marks the triumph of good over evil. During this festival, Hindu homes are emblazoned with lights to symbolize this triumph.

### **Christmas (25 December)**

Christmas is celebrated by Christians similar to any other part of the world. Midnight services are held at churches on Christmas eve. Shopping centres, hotels, oldfolks homes and children's homes echo with beautiful carols. The revelry and yuletide spirit of Christmas is enjoyed by Christians and non-Christians alike.

#### **Note:**

*Dates of festivals may vary from year to year. Please check with Tourism Malaysia's Office nearest to you.*



## Currency

The unit of currency is the Malaysian Ringgit indicated as (RM) which is equivalent to 100 sen. Coins are issued in denominations of 1 sen, 5 sen, 10 sen, 20 sen, 50 sen and RM1.00. Currency notes are in RM1, RM2, RM5, RM10, RM20, RM50, RM100, RM 500 and RM1,000. Foreign currency and travellers cheques can be converted to Malaysian Ringgit at banks or authorised money changers throughout the country.



*Different denominations of the Malaysian Currency.*

## What To Wear

Light, cool and casual clothing is recommended all year round. For more formal occasions, jacket and tie or long sleeved batik for men and dresses for women.

## Airport Tax

An airport tax of RM5.00 and RM40.00 is charged upon departure for all domestic and international flight passengers respectively.

## Water

It is generally safe to drink water straight from the tap.

## Electricity

Malaysia's voltage is 220 - 240 volts AC at 50 cycles per second.

## Telephones

Local calls can be made from public phones, whether coin or card operated. International calls can be made from phone booths with card phone facilities or at any Telecoms offices. Most hotels are equipped with IDD service with a minimal service charge.

## Postal Services

Post offices are open daily from 8. a.m.-5p.m. and closed on Sundays and public holidays (For Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu, closed on Fridays and public holidays). The General Post Office in Kuala Lumpur is opened from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. daily and from 10 a.m. - 12.45 p.m. on Sundays.

Most international hotels provide postal services at their front desk.

## Medical Services

Medical services are available in most towns at government-run hospitals and private clinics. Non-prescription drugs are available at pharmacies as well as supermarkets, hotels and shopping centres.

## Tourist Police

Visitors who encounter unforeseen problems and difficulties can seek the Malaysian Tourist Police Unit for assistance. They usually patrol tourist spots and will render assistance and generally safeguard tourists' security. Tourist Police Unit telephone numbers in the major cities are: Kuala Lumpur (03-2496593/92, Johor Bahru (07-2232222), Malacca (06-2703238), Penang (04-2615522), Alor Setar (04-7321222), Kuala Terengganu (09-6222222), Kota Bahru (09-7472222) and Kuching (082-241133).

## Business Hours

The country is run on a normal eight hours a day system with Saturday as half day and Sunday a day of rest. In the states of Kelantan, Terengganu and Kedah, Friday is a day of rest with Thursdays as half days.

Government offices are opened from 8a.m. up to 4.15p.m. on weekdays and 8a.m. to 12.45pm on Thursdays (Kelantan, Terengganu and Kedah) and Saturdays (other remaining states). Banking hours are generally from 10a.m. to 3p.m. from Monday to Friday and 9.30a.m. to 11.30a.m. on Saturdays. Department stores and supermarkets are opened daily from 10a.m. to 10p.m.

## Tipping

Tipping is not a way of life in Malaysia. It is unnecessary in hotels and restaurants where there is already a 10% service charge, unless the service rendered is exceptionally good.

## Export of Antiquities

Antiquities may not be exported without a licence from the Director-General of the Museums Department.

## Diplomatic Missions

72 countries have diplomatic missions in Malaysia and 26 are accredited to Malaysia from neighbouring capitals. They are generally located in Kuala Lumpur. To contact your own Embassy, check with the hotel operator or refer to a Telephone Directory.



## THE STATES OF MALAYSIA

Malaysia's attractions are multi-faceted, with each state offering individual appeal. For visitors, whatever their preferences, Malaysia offers something for everyone.

**Perlis** is the northern most state in Peninsular Malaysia and shares its border with Thailand. Agriculture is the main economic activity, with padi and sugarcane as the main crops.

Kangar, the state capital and Arau the royal town, are the two major towns while Kuala Perlis is a gateway point to Langkawi Island. Padang Besar on the Thai-Malaysia border is popular among shoppers. Other places of interest include Gua Kelam, Sungai Batu Pahat, Snake Farm and Tasik Melati.

**Kedah** the northern state with a population of over a million is the "Rice Bowl of Malaysia". Vast stretches of padi fields against a backdrop of mountains is the imposing scenery here.

Alor Setar, the state capital has many attractions: the State Museum, Pekan Rabu Bazaar, State Mosque, the old palace of Balai Besar and Balai Nobat. Off its coast lies Pulau Langkawi, a free port which offers duty free shopping and lures many sun 'n' fun seekers to its white sandy beaches and blue green waters.



Funicular railway at Penang Hill.

**Penang**, popularly known as the 'Pearl of the Orient' comprises Seberang Perai, a thin strip on the mainland and Penang Island with their potpourri of Malay, Chinese, Indian and Nyonya cultures. Georgetown, the capital, is the seat of administration and the commercial hub of the state. Attractions around Georgetown include the State Museum and Art Gallery, Fort Cornwallis, Wat Chayamangkalaram, State Mosque, Kapitan Kling Mosque, Khoo Kongsi and Kuan Yin Teng Temple.

Penang owes much of its fame to its fine beaches which are ideal for all types of water sports. Along its beaches, resorts of international standards have sprouted up offering full facilities for rest and recreation. Other places of interest include the Snake Temple, Penang Hill, Kek Lok Si Temple, Butterfly Farm, Sri Mariamman Temple, Botanical Gardens and Bird Park at Seberang Jaya.

**Perak** 'The Silver State' with a population of 2 million, owes its name to Perak, the silvery colour of processed tin ore which Perak produces in great quantities. Ipoh, its capital, is the second largest city in Malaysia.

Its points of interest are the limestone cave temples of Perak Tong and Sam Poh Tong, the Geological Museum, the ruins of Kellie's Castle, Taiping Lake Gardens, Bukit Larut Hill Resorts, State Museum, Ubudiah Mosque, Kuala Gula Bird Sanctuary and Kuala Woh Jungle Park. Off its coast, Teluk Batik near Lumut and Pangkor Island offer fine stretches of beaches.

**Selangor** is the industrial hub of Malaysia. The country's largest industrial site is located in Shah Alam, the state's

**Negeri Sembilan** combines history and nature. This is the land of early settlers, from Minangkabau in Sumatra. Their influence is reflected in the horn-shaped architecture such as the Istana Lama Seri Menanti. The state also boasts the popular beach resort town of Port Dickson whose numerous seaside facilities and a choice of accommodation make it a top destination among locals.

**Malacca** resembles a compact living museum - filled with an intriguing mix of its inhabitants - Malays, Chinese, Indians, Straits-born Chinese and Portuguese descendants. Its history dates from the 15th century when the Malacca Sultanate was at the height of its power and its subsequent takeover by the Portuguese, Dutch and then the British.

They left behind a wealth of the past, evident in Malacca's medieval charm, narrow streets, picturesque buildings of quaint architecture and multi-racial population. Points of interest include Bukit Cina, Cheng Hoon Teng Temple, Hang Li Po's Well, Porta de Santiago, St. Paul's Church, Stadthuys, Church of St. Peter, Tranquerah Mosque, Malacca Museum, Christ Church, Portuguese Square, the 'Light and Sound Show' and Maritime Museum.



Stadthuys and Christ Church

**Johor** is Malaysia's Southern Gateway. Overlooking Singapore, its proximity to the republic makes it a favourite destination with Singaporeans. It has a long coastline and its most popular beach is the 26km stretch at Desaru on the southeast coast. Off the coast, there are several enchanting islands. Among them are Pulau Rawa, Pulau Tinggi, Pulau Sibul, Pulau Besar and Pulau Tengah. Further inland, Johor is home to Endau-Rompin National Park, one of the few lowland forests in Malaysia.

Places of interest around Johor Bahru, the state capital, include the Royal Abu Bakar Museum, Mawar Handicraft Centre, Zoo, Sultan Abu Bakar Mosque and the Royal Mausoleum.

**Pahang** is famous for its hill resorts and large tracts of forests, its most famous being Taman Negara (National Park). Taman Negara, one of the world's oldest rainforests and home to thousands of species of flora and fauna, is more than 100 million years old.

Kuantan, the state capital, is not only fast developing as a commercial town but is also a popular seaside resort. For lovers of sun and surf, Pahang offers Teluk Chempedak, Club Med Cherating, Chendor and Pulau Tioman. The state's hill resorts, Cameron Highlands, Genting Highlands and Fraser's Hill are sought after by visitors for their cool fresh mountain air and lush green forests.





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**Selangor** is the industrial hub of Malaysia. The country's largest industrial site is located in Shah Alam, the state's capital.



*A panoramic view of Shah Alam*

Despite being industry-based, attractions abound. This includes Bukit Cahaya Seri Alam Agricultural Park, the world's first and only agroforestry park. Other attractions include the Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah mosque, Batu Caves, wherein lies a Hindu shrine accessible by a steep climb up 272 steps and the National Zoo-Aquarium. Northwest of Shah Alam is Kuala Selangor, home of rich birdlife and fireflies. After dark, riverboat rides to view the fireflies' frenzied 'glow-worm-like' antics can be a fascinating experience.

**Kuala Lumpur** - the capital of Malaysia, where more than a million work and reside, offers a blend of the old and the new. It consists of modern high-rise buildings intermingled with older structures featuring a wide range of influences; Moorish, Islamic, Tudor, Minangkabau and contemporary.

Buildings to look out for include the Sultan Abdul Samad Building, Parliament House, Railway Station, National Mosque and Masjid Jamek. Other places of interest are the National Monument, Lake Gardens, Chinatown, Central Market, Merdeka Square, National Museum, Karyaneka Centre, National Planetarium and Tasik Perdana (Lake Gardens) with a Bird Park, Deer Park, Orchid Garden, Hibiscus Garden and Butterfly Farm.

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*Rebana Ubi - giant drums originating from Kelantan.*

**Terengganu**, known for its long sweeping coastline with deep blue-green waters is a popular destination. Off its coast are Pulau Kapas, Pulau Redang and Pulau Perhentian, which are haunts of the underwater adventurers.

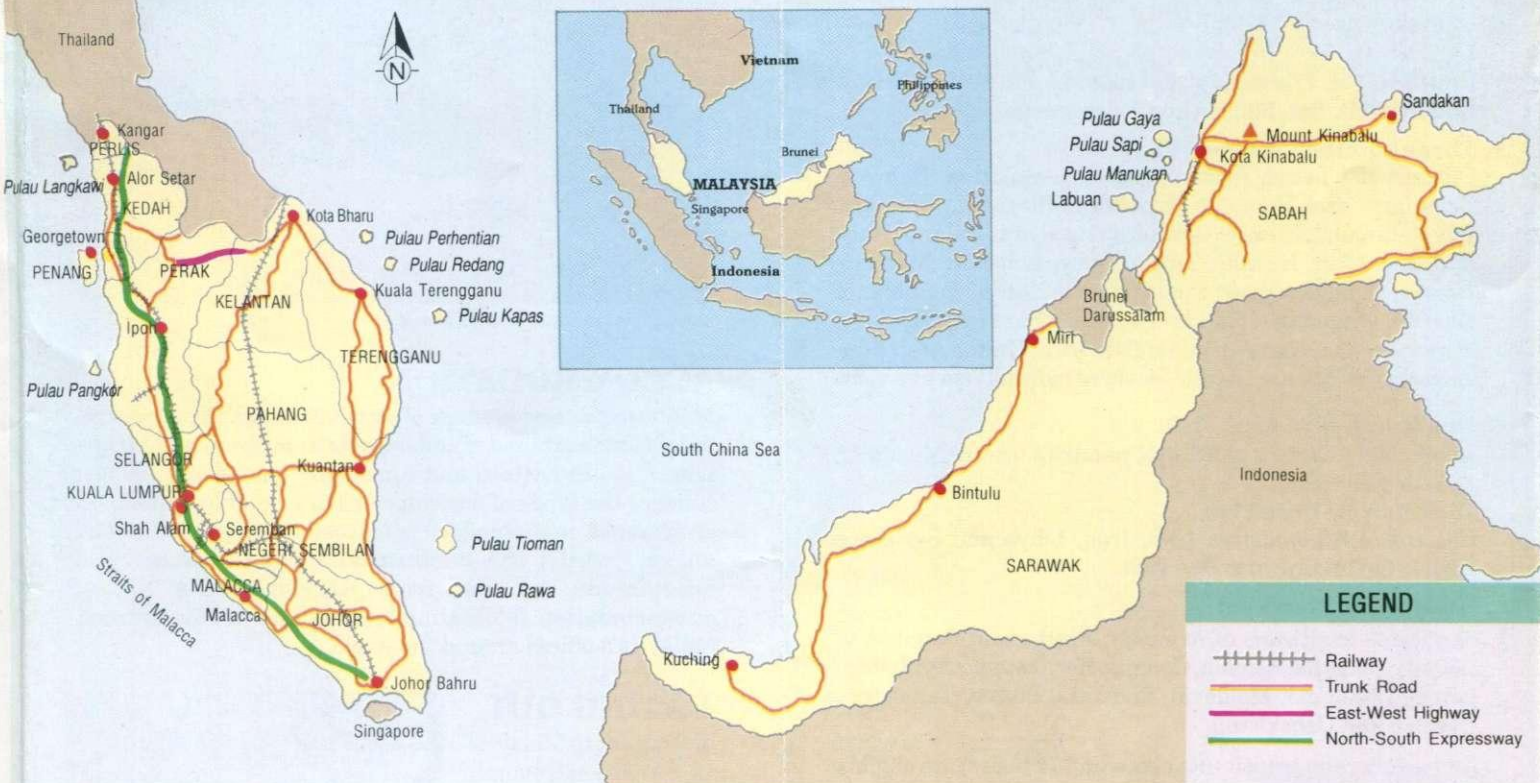
The state offers a natural paradise in its Kenyir Lake, a rockfilled dam which has become an angler's haven with its teeming fish population. Sixty kilometres south of Kuala Terengganu, the state capital, are the beach resorts of Tanjung Jara and Rantau Abang. The latter is one of the best places to watch the giant Leatherback turtles arrive to nest from May to September.

**Kelantan** is the northern most state on the east coast, steeped in timeless traditions where colourful pastimes are a way of life. It is the home of giant tops, kites and the *wayang kulit* - a shadow play.

Places of interest around the state capital of Kota Bharu are the Central Market, State Museum and *Gelanggang Seni* (cultural centre). Attractions outside the capital include the beaches of Pantai Cahaya Bulan, Sabak and Irama and waterfalls at Lata Bali, Lata Berangan, Lata Pek and Lata Renyok.



# MALAYSIA



**Sabah**, the 'The Land Below The Wind', is mountainous with lush tropical rain forests. The various islands along its coastline offer stretches of white sandy beaches, crystal clear waters and some of the most spectacular coral reefs and marine life in the world. Pulau Sipadan with its unparalleled undersea scenery, marine life, spectacular reefs, caverns, cliffs and overhangs is a much sought after destination among deep sea adventurers.

Other points of interest are the islands of Gaya, Sapi, Manukan, Poring Hot Spring, Gomantong Caves, the Tenom-Kota Kinabalu train ride, Sepilok Orang Utan Sanctuary, numerous National Parks and Mount Kinabalu which, at 4,101 metres above sea level, is one of South-East Asia's highest peaks.



*Sarawak Cultural Village*

**Sarawak's** main attractions are the diverse ethnic groups with their rich customs and traditions and the lure of primeval jungles. The state offers a wealth of fascinating sights - the Mulu Caves, Niah Caves, Bako National Park and rich wildlife. The Sarawak Cultural Village is a one-stop centre to display the diverse cultures of Sarawak. Demonstrations of dances and handicraft making are staged regularly for visitors.

Kuching, the capital, is a riverine town of multifaceted attractions. Places of interest around Kuching include the Astana, Fort Margherita, the State Mosque, the Tua Pek Kong and Hong San Temples. Its Museum - one of Asia's finest, houses an excellent collection of ethnological and archaeological artifacts on Borneo.

**Cameron Highlands**, (1,829m above sea level) in Pahang, is the largest of the hill resorts in Malaysia. There are three main townships - Ringlet, Tanah Rata and Brinchang, with the last two being popular with tourists. Cool climate averaging from 10°C - 21°C and the rich soil make it conducive for tea growing and a variety of temperate and sub-temperate vegetables and fruits. Attractions include the market square at Brinchang, handicraft stores, Chin Swee Buddhist Temple, and visits to vegetable and fruit farms and tea plantations. There are old colonial-type houses that offer a glimpse of the past and an 18-hole, par 71 golf course which is open to the public.

**Fraser's Hill**, (1,524 metres above sea level) in Pahang is another enchanting hill resort. At the resort there are jungle trails, waterfalls, flower nurseries and mushroom farms. It is also a popular venue for bird watchers. Its 9-hole, par-32 golf course is open to the public. The drive from Kuala Lumpur to the resort is about 2 hours.



*Fraser's Hill*

**Genting Highlands**, (2,000m above sea level) is just 50 km from Kuala Lumpur. Attractions at this cool mountain weather resort include an artificial lake, a horse ranch which offers equestrian sport, a 16-lane bowling alley and a heated indoor swimming pool. A cable car ride from 914 metres up to the resort at 1,768 metres provides a thrilling experience.

For golfers, the Awana Golf and Country Club offers a



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The **Federal Territory of Labuan**, off the coast of the South China Sea, near the border between Sabah and Sarawak, is a charming little port. It is also a duty-free haven. Visitors can stroll down the Botanical Gardens dating back to colonial days, take in the beautifully laid-out war memorial or enjoy a leisurely round of golf at the 9-hole course.



*Tea plantations of Cameron Highlands.*

## HILL RESORTS

The lofty mountains and foothills of Malaysia are dotted with innumerable nature retreats for those wanting to escape the humdrum existence of the everyday world. These range from hill stations of old world charm - quaint reminders of a bygone era; to the more sophisticated and cosmopolitan hill resorts of more recent origin. Almost all states in the country can boast of a hill resort. Some of the popular hill resorts are:

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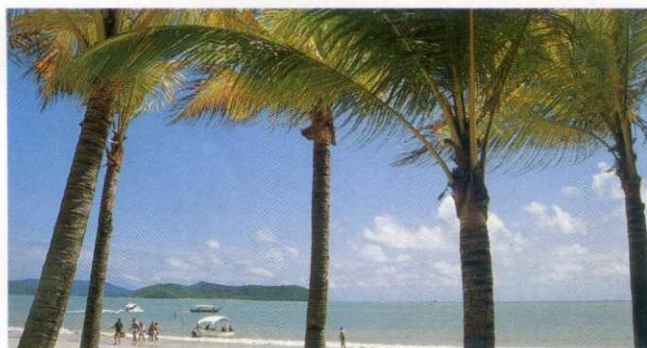
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For golfers, the Awana Golf and Country Club offers a challenging 18-hole, par 71-golf course. The indoor Genting Theme Park offers a hive of activity with amusement games and high-tech joy rides. The Genting Theatre Restaurant offers fine dining and international dinner shows while Casino de Genting offers Blackjack, Baccarat, Keno, French Bull, Roulette, Tai Sai and slot machines.

## ISLANDS AND BEACHES

Blessed with hundreds of kilometres of golden beaches, Malaysia has a varied selection of beaches and island resorts, each with their own unique attractions and charm. Dotting the coastline are many little islands which, with its cool waters, support a fascinating variety of beautiful corals and other marine life within its depths. The crystal-clear waters makes it ideal for snorkelling and scuba diving. Some of the popular islands and beaches are;

**Penang** is just the island if you seek a seaside vacation. The island is complemented by good seaports facilities. Popular beaches are located at Batu Ferringhi, north of the island, 14km from Georgetown. Within easy reach of the beach sites is the fishing village of Teluk Bahang while to the south are the Penang Butterfly Farm, Orchid Farm and Forest Recreation Park wherein is also located a Forestry Museum.



*Pulau Langkawi*



**Pulau Langkawi**, relatively remote and unspoiled, are for those searching for the ultimate tropical island escapade. It is known for its natural beauty and enduring legends. Popular beaches on the island are Pantai Cenang, Pantai Kok, Pantai Tengah, Tanjung Rhu and Pantai Pasir Hitam. Pulau Langkawi offers a range of accommodation facilities, from upmarket resorts to moderately priced accommodation. Among the places to visit are Padang Masirat (The Field of Burnt Rice), Telaga Tujuh (Seven Wells), Telaga Air Panas (Hot Springs) Gua Cherita (Cave of Stories) and Makam Mahsuri (Mahsuri Mausoleum).

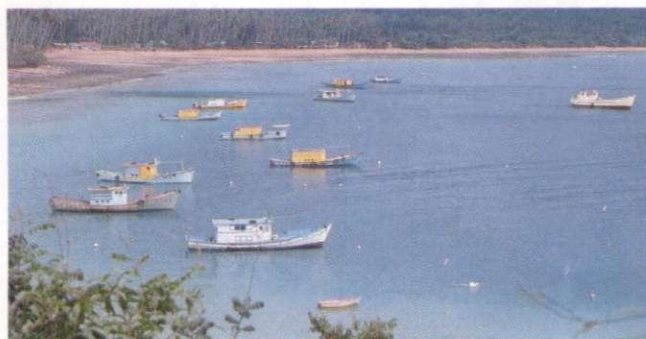
South of Pulau Langkawi are two islands popular for day trip outings. Pulau Singa Besar with over 90 species of birds and animals is a Bird and Animal Sanctuary. Pulau Dayang Bunting's foremost attraction is its enchanting tranquil lake. Legend has it that a couple, childless for nineteen years, were blessed with a baby after the woman had taken a drink from the lake.



*Pulau Pangkor*

**Pulau Pangkor**, off the coastal town of Lumut is famous for its anchovies and squids. The real attraction here are the enchanting beaches on the Western coastline - Pantai Puteri Dewi, Teluk Belanga, Teluk Nipah and Pasir Bogak, marvellous spots for swimming.

Pangkor Laut Island is privately-owned. Its Emerald Bay boasts a lovely beach of fine white sand amidst pristine surroundings.



*Pulau Tioman*

**Cherating**, located 47km from Kuantan, with its fine beaches is popular for windsurfing and swimming. Asia's first Club Mediterranee is located here. A number of international standard resorts are found here together with affordable chalets and beach houses.

**Pulau Redang**, designated as a marine park, is the largest of a group of islands off Terengganu. Scuba diving and swimming are the main activities here. Once a destination for camping travellers, it is now the site of a massive tourism development project comprising hotel and resort development, golf course, horse ranch and sports complex.

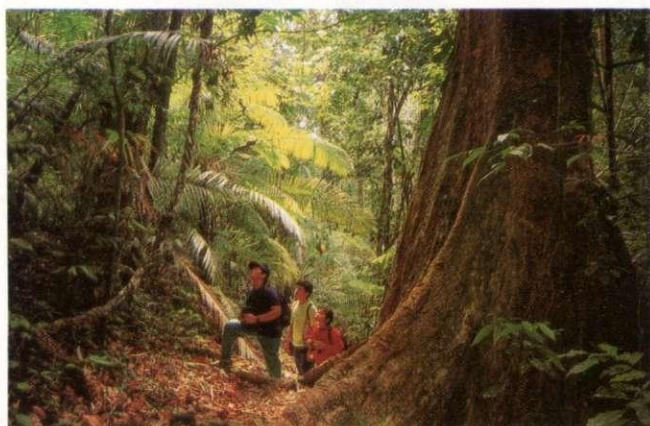
**Pulau Tioman**, located off Mersing, is the perfect island for those seeking tranquility and retreat. Its beaches are refreshingly unspoilt



## NATIONAL PARKS

The Malaysian jungles have remained virtually untouched by nature or man for more than 100 million years. Besides the many splendid gorges, magnificent rivers and towering hills, Malaysia's National Parks provide an exhaustive adventure tour of thrills and spills - boating, shooting through rapids, fishing, bird-watching, mountain climbing, exploring limestone caves, swimming and camping. Some of the popular National Parks are:

**Taman Negara** with an area of 4,343 sq. km, straddles the borders of Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang. It has a diverse flora and fauna and particularly favoured for animal observation hides. A visitor could go trekking, take boat trips to enjoy the thrills of shooting through rapids and fishing. The highest mountain here, Gunung Tahan (2,187m) is located in Taman Negara. Mountaineering enthusiasts will find Gunung Tahan another challenge to conquer. It takes at least three days to journey from the foot of the mountain to the summit and back.



*Taman Negara, a must for nature lovers.*

The **Endau-Rompin National Park** covers the boundary between Johor and Pahang. Sprawling over an estimated area of 870 sq km, it is one of the few remaining lowland forests. It encompasses the watershed of the Endau and Rompin rivers from which it derives its name. Many insects and wildlife as well as various endemic varieties of plants have been discovered within the centuries-old forest. Trekking, swimming and bird-watching are some of the activities that could be arranged.

**Kinabalu National Park** in the state of Sabah covers an area of 754 sq km. Rising above it is Mt Kinabalu (4,101m) one of the highest mountains in Southeast Asia. Trekking up Mount Kinabalu can be a rewarding experience - its rich flora and fauna is unsurpassed and reaching its peak, a feat unlike any other.

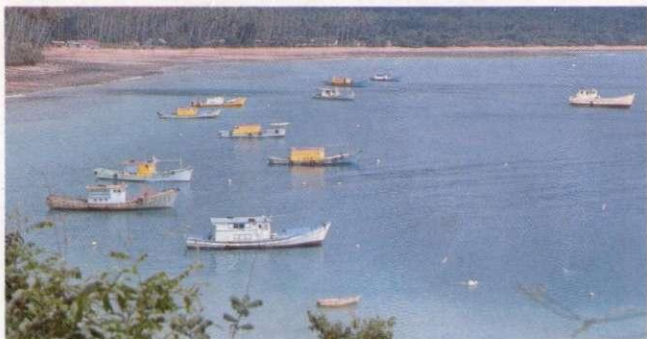


*River trips along Sungai Tahan.*

**Gunung Mulu National Park** is an amazingly compact area full of limestone fascinations all within the 544 sq km in North Sarawak. It contains the Deer Cave; the largest cave passages known to man at 100 metres wide and 120 metres high, Clearwater Cave which at 51km, is the longest cave system in Southeast Asia and the Sarawak Chamber



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**Pulau Tioman**, located off Mersing, is the perfect island for those seeking tranquility and retreat. Its beaches are refreshingly unspoilt, being devoid of the usual commercial trappings. It is the perfect island in the sun, with reefs for diving and clear water for swimming and snorkelling. The island has an international class hotel besides its many beach chalets.



*Scuba-diving at Pulau Tioman.*

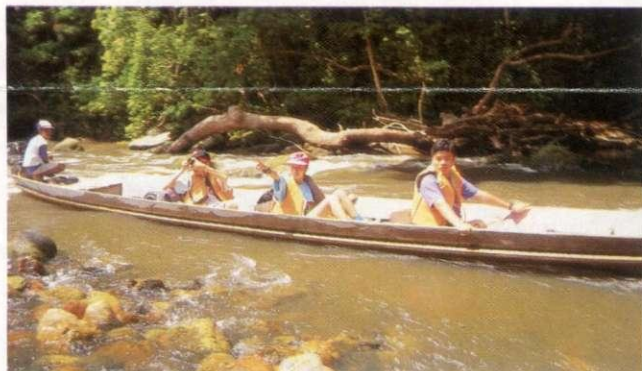
**Desaru**, located 98km northeast of Johor Bahru, covers a 26 km stretch of beach. All kinds of sports, from snorkelling, swimming and canoeing, jungle-trekking to golfing can be enjoyed here. Three top-class hotels are already established at Desaru, offering impressive resort facilities for the above activities. Off the coast, are Pulau Sibul, Pulau Besar, Pulau Tinggi and Pulau Rawa, popular for their unspoilt charm and tranquility.

**Tanjung Aru**, six kilometres from Kota Kinabalu, Sabah is a long stretch of beach lined with picturesque palm and casuarina trees all along its soft, fine sands. Among the popular activities here are boating, water skiing, windsurfing, snorkelling and scuba diving.

**Santubong**, a picturesque fishing village about 35km from Kuching, Sarawak's capital, boasts some of the finest beaches in the state. Nestled within a private enclave is Damai Beach, where the Holiday Inn Damai Beach Resort is located. The resort offers various water sports and recreational facilities. Close to Damai Beach is Pantai Penyok - perfect for swimming, snorkelling and other water sports activities.

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*Mount Kinabalu*

**Niah National Park** in Sarawak is made up of 3,103 hectares of forest and limestone. The major attraction here is the Niah Caves which cover 11 hectares. Located high up are birds' nests, a culinary delight that are harvested from the ceiling of the caves by men climbing up bamboo poles. The caves are also of rich archeological interest as artefacts have been discovered here, establishing man's existence dating 40,000 years ago.

**Bako National Park** covers 2,742 hectares of primary forest at the mouth of the Bako River in Sarawak. It has at least seven types of vegetation ranging from lowland dipterocarp forest to desert-like shrubs in its upper reaches. A well-marked trail system takes visitors through the various vegetation types in the park.

Visitors here can see various types of flora and wildlife unique to this part of the world. Long-tailed macaques, monitor lizards, wildboars and proboscis monkeys are just a few of the animals found here, in their natural habitat.





*The impressive skyline of Kuala Lumpur.*

## INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a tropical paradise situated 7 degrees north of the Equator in the heart of Southeast Asia. It comprises Peninsular Malaysia and the two states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo. Together, they cover a total area of 329,758 sq km. The climate is warm and humid throughout the year with cooler temperatures in the hill resorts. Temperatures range from 21°C to 32°C. Average annual rainfall varies from 2,000mm - 2,500mm and humidity is high all year round.

Malaysia is a multi-racial country with a population of approximately 21.3 million. This consists of the main racial groups of Malays, Chinese and Indians and a very diverse group of indigenous people in Sabah and Sarawak. Bahasa Melayu is the national language but English is widely spoken. Islam is the official religion but Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and other religions are practised freely.

Malaysia is 8 hours ahead of GMT and 16 hours ahead of the U.S. Pacific Standard Time.

## HISTORY

Malaysia's history has been one of continual interaction with foreign powers and influences because of its strategic position between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea which has made it the meeting place for traders and travellers.

Hindu-Buddhist influence was strong in the northwest before the coming of Islam. Archaeological findings at Bujang Valley in the state of Kedah furnishes evidences of a Hindu-Buddhist civilisation that dated back to 300AD. It flourished as an important centre of trade and commerce until the 13th century when Malacca, abundant in spices, attracted colonial powers. By 1511, Malacca fell to the Portuguese, then in 1641 the Dutch took over and finally the British in 1815. The British consolidated their hold on the Malay states following Francis Light's arrival in Penang in 1786.

Across the seas, on the island of Borneo, Sarawak was ruled by a British adventurer, James Brooke and his descendants since 1841. In 1888, Sarawak and North Borneo (Sabah) became British protectorates.

In the 1930s, the first stirrings of Malayan nationalism were felt. Following the end of World War II, there was a resurgence of the nationalism movement culminating in the independence for the Federation of Malaya on 31 August 1957.

In 1963, Malaysia was formed. Today, Malaysia is a prominent member of the 9-member Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) which comprises Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar and Laos.

## GOVERNMENT

Malaysia comprises 13 states and two federal territories - Kuala Lumpur and Labuan (an island off the coast of Sabah). Nine of the states have a hereditary ruler respectively from which the Supreme Head of State, the *Yang Di-Pertuan Agong* (King) is elected every five years.

The government is based on parliamentary democracy. The head of the government, the Prime Minister heads the Cabinet of Ministers.



*Malaysia's national car plant.*

## ECONOMY

Manufacturing forms the largest single component of Malaysia's economy. Malaysia is one of the world's largest producers of rubber, tin, palm oil, timber, pepper and petroleum. Tourism, too, is emerging as a major revenue earner.

## ENTRY FORMALITIES

Visitors must be in possession of national passports or other internationally recognized travel documents, endorsed for travelling in Malaysia and with a validity period of at least six months beyond the time of stay allowed in Malaysia.

Visitors on social and business visit purposes are to be guided by the following visa requirements: